

From the Acquisition Support Center Director

Close to a year has passed since I took over as the Acquisition Support Center (ASC) director. As I look back, it has at times been a great challenge and sacrifice for our organization's dedicated employees, but also a time for tremendous individual and professional growth as our team of problems solvers found new and innovative ways to reduce costs and increase efficiencies in supporting the Acquisition, Logistics and Technology Workforce and Army Transformation program. I would like to thank my senior staff and the entire ASC team for making this past year an overwhelming success. As I look forward, I challenge each of you to keep reaching for your professional and personal goals. Ultimately, with the necessary combination of training, education and experiential assignments, you will achieve them. Together, through our collective strength and enthusiasm, we can continue to make things better for our Army. Thanks for a tremendous year!



Change in Slating Approval

I'm happy to report on a change in the slating approval authority and process for centrally selected project/product managers and acquisition directors. Claude M. Bolton Jr., the Army Acquisition Executive (AAE), now has the responsibility for approving the slate of the selected principals to PM and acquisition director positions. He will have sole responsibility for the acquisition function within the Army Secretariat and the Army Staff. The Secretary of the Army (SECARMY) will continue to be the convening authority and the Army G-1 will still manage all centrally selected lists and command selection boards. All PMs and acquisition directors will be centrally selected.

Before this change, there were two approval chains: the SECARMY (through Army G-1) and the Director, Acquisition Career Management. Slating approval was a lengthy process even for minor changes. The new slating process creates one approval chain and reduces the time frame of all future command selection lists and subsequent slates. The new process combines the two chains and makes Secretary Bolton the final approving authority, although HQDA G-1 and the SECARMY will continue to provide oversight. For more information about this procedural change, contact MAJ Andrea Williams at (703) 805-1248 or andrea.williams@us.army.mil.

Intermediate Qualification Course (IQC) Launched

Congratulations to the first graduates of the FA51 IQC on acquisition leadership pilot class Feb. 17, 2006. The FA51 IQC class comprised 20 officers and 6 civilian Competitive Development Group (CDG) candidates. Student assessments were positive, with 65 percent of the students rating the course with an "A" and 35 percent giving it a "B." Their feedback will be incorporated into future iterations of the course to improve training value. FA51 IQC is the Army Acquisition Corps' functional-area specific Intermediate Level Education (ILE) follow-on course.

ILE, the Army's replacement for the legacy Command and General Staff Officers' Course (CGSOC), is required for Military Education Level IV for officers as of January 2006. The target population is primarily officers in year groups 1994 and younger, with some exceptions for officers who did not complete the legacy CGSOC or make sufficient progress to stay enrolled in the legacy CGSOC correspondence course. IQC is now a requirement for civilians to graduate from the CDG program. The FA51 IQC is part of the overall FA51 leader development plan for captains and majors. There are four classes scheduled per year with an optimal class size of 30 and a maximum class of 36. The class is offered through the University of Texas (UT) at Austin's Institute for Advanced Technology and the Army's Senior Service College (SSC) Fellowship program. UT-Austin is ideally situated near Army facilities at Fort Hood, TX, close to industry and academia. The course uses a combination of seminars, workshops, guest speakers, staff rides, site visits and mentorship from the SSC Fellows to accomplish these objectives:

- Provide tools to assist in developing acquisition leaders capable of leading, directing and commanding any acquisition organization at the O-5/GS-14 and O-6/GS-15 levels.
- Develop and motivate a pool of future senior officers trained in innovative leadership and prepared for complex acquisition challenges.
- Expose students to real-world customer needs and PM/program executive office (PEO) operations through a series of speakers, staff rides and field trips.
- Leverage the SSC Fellows and visiting senior leaders to provide student mentorship.
- Develop an enhanced understanding of the customer and his or her support needs, industrial operations and its defense interface, and the civilian workforce.
- Expose students to the knowledge base of a world-class, tier-1 university for practical application tools that have proven successful.

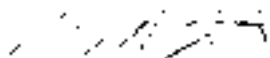
If you are interested in attending IQC, contact your assignment officer at the U.S. Army Human Resources Command's Acquisition Management Branch (for officers) or the CDG Program Manager (for civilian candidates). More information on the FA51 Leader Development Plan can be found by contacting the ASC proponent, LTC Aaron Brown, at (703) 805-1236 or aaron.m.brown@us.army.mil.

Briefings and information on the FA51 Leader Development Plan are available online at <http://asc.army.mil/programs/LDP/default.cfm>.

Specific information from UT-Austin on the FA51 IQC is available online at http://www.iat.utexas.edu/FA_51.html.

Wounded Warrior Program

The Wounded Soldier Program was created from an Army Vice Chief of Staff tasker called Disabled Soldier Support System. The initial program has migrated to what is now the U.S. Army's Wounded Warrior Program. On Jan. 6, 2004, the Acting SECARMY signed a memo authorizing the AAE to develop a program to allow Soldiers, wounded during operations, the opportunity to remain on active duty (AD). The Wounded Soldier Integrated Process Team developed a plan and ASC received the mission to go forward with the pilot program in November 2004. Soldiers eligible for this program are assigned to Walter Reed Army Medical Center (WRAMC), Washington, DC, where they receive medical care and are waiting for their physical evaluation board results to see if they are fit to remain on AD. Once accepted into the program, they will travel from WRAMC to Fort Belvoir, VA, and other communities within the National Capital Region to train with PEOs/PMs and other acquisition agencies. For more information about the Wounded Warrior Program, contact CW3(P) Sabrina Gay-McKoy at (703) 805-1249/DSN 655-1249 or mckoy.gay@us.army.mil. Additional information is also available at <https://www.aw2.army.mil>.



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Practical Project Management — Program Perspective

COL John D. Burke

Practical Project Management — Program Perspective is the second in a series of short articles to improve Army project and product managers' (PMs') effectiveness.

"A businessman in uniform." These were the most hurtful and instructive four words spoken to me over the nearly 16 years of my acquisition experience. Hurtful because the comment really meant, "you're not one of us," and instructive because of the importance to have and convey a realistic, Army-team perspective.

The comment, made by a fellow officer, came during a Pre-Command Course conducted at Fort Leavenworth, KS. I hadn't seen him since moving into the acquisition track a few years earlier. The comment wasn't intentionally disparaging. He said it spontaneously when, upon meeting him, I explained what I had been doing since we last saw each other.

Army acquisition professionals have different time horizons, complexities, and regulatory and statutory requirements than our combat arms and line-Army counterparts. One of the key tasks for acquisition leaders is to set the perspective for their project to the outside community so the potential information gap between "them" and "us" is closed.



U.S. Army CWO Eric A. Saldana, 57th Medical Co., Air Ambulance, updates the data loaders for an aircraft global positioning system at Balad Air Base, Iraq, April 21, 2006. (U.S. Air Force photo by TSGT Denise Rayder.)

A Project's Internal and External Views

The internal and external view concept is borrowed from database design. Databases have an internal view of the data elements, database management programs, data design, rules, hierarchy and relationships. For instance, the data elements on a driver's license include metadata (definitions of data), database links, rules, relationships and the database engine (Oracle® or Access®). Specific data fields include the picture reference number and format, driver's license number, date of birth and others. These data elements are linked through a process that, except for the database designers and software engineers, is arcane detail.

The external view — what you hold in your hand — of the driver's license is the actual picture, the printed card, stamps and signatures. None of the underlying structure of the data fields on your license is visible to you, nor does it need to be. What you care about is the good-looking picture for the highway patrolman to see, not how it was produced on the card stock.

Reconciling the Internal and External Views

The first step is to understand the difference between the internal view and definition of your project and the external view. Although this concept may seem simple, like the underlying structure of the driver's license, within the project office there are sophisticated processes, knowledge and regulatory compliance that should be largely invisible to the external community. We often rely on what's familiar and thus easy to use in explanations. Unless there is a pressing requirement to educate others about the acquisition process, I recommend focusing on the output — what the product does.

A project office's workforce manages the internal view. Engineers of various disciplines, logisticians, cost estimators, contract

specialists, budget analysts and administrative support personnel represent expertise in their respective areas. A contract specialist's knowledge includes the *Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR)* as well as the fixed, cost-plus and General Services Administration contracts in force.

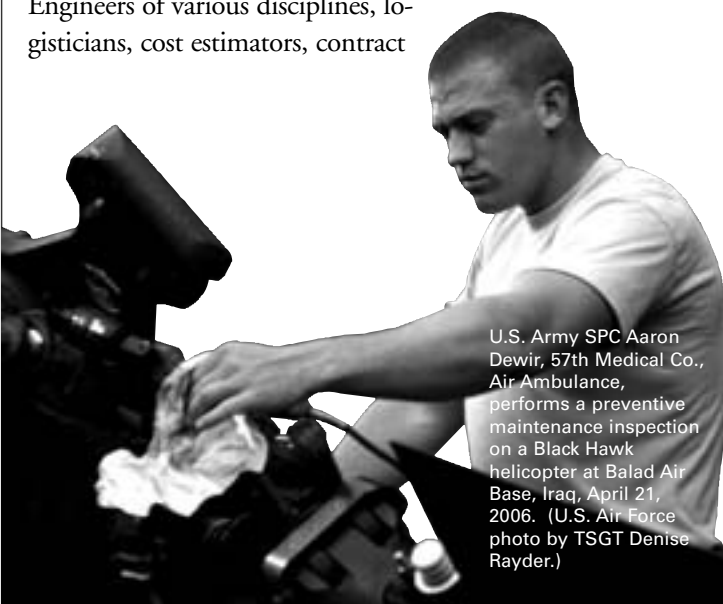
A professional contract specialist should feel comfortable discussing a fixed-price-plus-incentive-fee contract and its sub-elements. Processes, rules, techniques and structure are examples of how, internal to the project, we manage programs every day. The internal view is incomplete without the corresponding external view.

The external view is the observer's perspective. There are many external views of your project. Examples include:

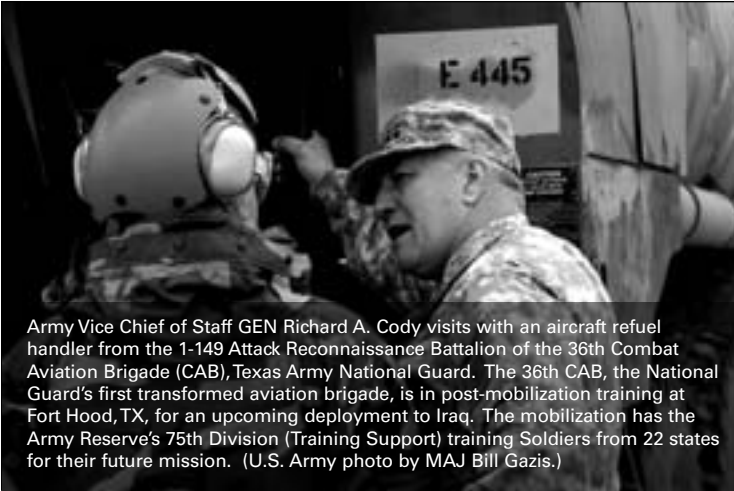
- Operational, such as combatant commanders and their Soldiers.
- Financial, such as Army, Office of the Secretary of Defense (OSD) and congressional budget offices.
- Personnel, such as local unions, the U.S. Army Human Resources Command and the U.S. Army Acquisition Support Center.
- Community, such as the local chambers of commerce, installation support and media.
- Industry, such as prime, support, subcontractors and competitors to your prime.

Case in point, a division commander sees your products from the dimension of combat capability, training skills, integration with other combat systems, required personnel proficiency, ranges required and safety, just to name a few. None of these elements directly relate to contract types or incentive fees. When the question comes in from a combatant commander regarding engine deliveries for attack aircraft, how does the project office respond?

Depending on the internal or external perspective, the G-4's answer could be, "Sir, the PM office says the 701C engines will be inspected IAW *FAR Part 30* by the GFR, then DD250'd by DCMA on or about August 17, where they will be shipped GBL to the APOD. There is an issue with DFAS about billing cycles ... but DCAA is working with the prime to clear that up." This is an excellent internal description but a terrible external explanation. What the field commander really wants to know is when the engines will be installed to make his aircraft operational and "off ground." The representative from the project office answering this question has to understand and know the context to respond appropriately.



U.S. Army SPC Aaron Dewir, 57th Medical Co., Air Ambulance, performs a preventive maintenance inspection on a Black Hawk helicopter at Balad Air Base, Iraq, April 21, 2006. (U.S. Air Force photo by TSGT Denise Rayder.)



Army Vice Chief of Staff GEN Richard A. Cody visits with an aircraft refuel handler from the 1-149 Attack Reconnaissance Battalion of the 36th Combat Aviation Brigade (CAB), Texas Army National Guard. The 36th CAB, the National Guard's first transformed aviation brigade, is in post-mobilization training at Fort Hood, TX, for an upcoming deployment to Iraq. The mobilization has the Army Reserve's 75th Division (Training Support) training Soldiers from 22 states for their future mission. (U.S. Army photo by MAJ Bill Gazis.)

A second example is a congressional staffer who, when asking questions on cost and schedule, is unlikely to ask the same question as an Army or OSD cost estimator in the same vein. The question would probably relate to how your product compares to other products within the Army, other services, OSD priorities or industry pressures.

Successful project leaders must fully understand the internal view — or how the program management engine works — to relate and communicate the value to the external community. Likewise, within the project office, a full understanding of the internal processes and relationships is essential to the program's leadership so they too can relate inside and outside the program.

Developing a Workable Project External View

The project manager and the project will establish a means to reconcile the internal and external product views. In one sense this is easy because a program office has intimate knowledge of the product's cost, schedule, performance, contracts and funding profile. After all, this is the workforce's expertise.

The challenge is how to develop the project's portrayal of its capabilities, functions and systems. Once we know how to present these project elements, they can now be readily translated, understood and integrated between the internal and external views. The problem develops when there is no translation. When the user needs an answer to a question, the best response is often simply found between the internal knowledge and its use, "When does the engine for A451 come in?" Interpretation: when will the aircraft be operational?

An example of the project leadership's task is how to relate a specialized element such as electromagnetic interference (EMI) and the effects on supply provisioning and maintenance training. How do they explain that the different approaches to EMI have ripple-out impacts affecting how

we train maintainers and develop test equipment? The specialized tasks of repairing EMI-compliant wiring and shielding could be something the gaining division's leadership should know during the initial fielding conference because this is a low-density, high-skill task requiring specialized and recurring training.

There are ways to broaden or create opportunities for project office members to think of the internal and external views depending on the situation. The project workforce's best case would be to become familiar with the external communities' priorities, operating procedures, lexicon, personalities and background. They now must be capable of converting internal knowledge into external action so it becomes routine and tightly coupled. A secondary benefit is the education and trust transferred to the external community when the project office can succinctly explain how problems are solved in the context of cooperating together to accomplish the mutual mission.

Areas fruitful for gaining external perspective include participating in user training, including new equipment training, maintenance training and instructor training, as well as observing advanced individual or sustainment training. Another area is for the workforce members to participate in fielding conferences, division readiness reviews, division systems synchronization conferences and operational test and evaluation, especially the pre-test work-ups with the operational test unit.

A different venue includes the many statutory and regulatory interfaces with government agencies. Even without directly participating, sitting in on Government Accountability Office (GAO) inquiries, DOD Inspector General briefings, congressional staff briefings, media interviews and industry conferences are valuable training for the project workforce. Success is when the electrical engineer answering a question from the Army public affairs office realizes, "I suspected his question on EMI filters had to do with a small company in a congressional district looking for business, not ferrous properties."

Becoming 'One of Us'

Project office personnel aren't assigned members of an operational command, such as the 1st Cavalry Division, nor are they full-time members of the GAO or other federal agencies. As experts in the mechanisms that build the project's internal view, while also gaining knowledge of the external view of those same mechanisms, the project leadership and workforce is able to lash together the two viewpoints.

This ability to reconcile the two viewpoints enables confidence and trust that the PM and the project office really understand the mission. With that trust and reliance on the expertise that project office members bring to the fight, we broaden an appreciation for what Army acquisition can do across the Army spectrum.

A response to the label “businessman in uniform” should be, “I am an acquisition professional doing my job to help the Army, just like you. Let me explain what we bring. One team, one fight.”

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News Briefs

Augmented Cognition Technology to Help Warfighters Handle Information Overload

Natick Soldier Center

Scientists at the Natick Soldier Center (NSC), the Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA) and Honeywell Corp. are developing augmented cognition technology to solve the modern warfighter's new and overwhelming problem — information overload.

“Augmented cognition is a very important program for the Army because it will increase survivability and effectiveness,” explained Henry Girolamo, the NSC DARPA agent for the Army's Augmented Cognition Program. “The technology we are developing will ultimately help warfighters when they are under stress and faced with information overload, and it will significantly improve mission performance.”

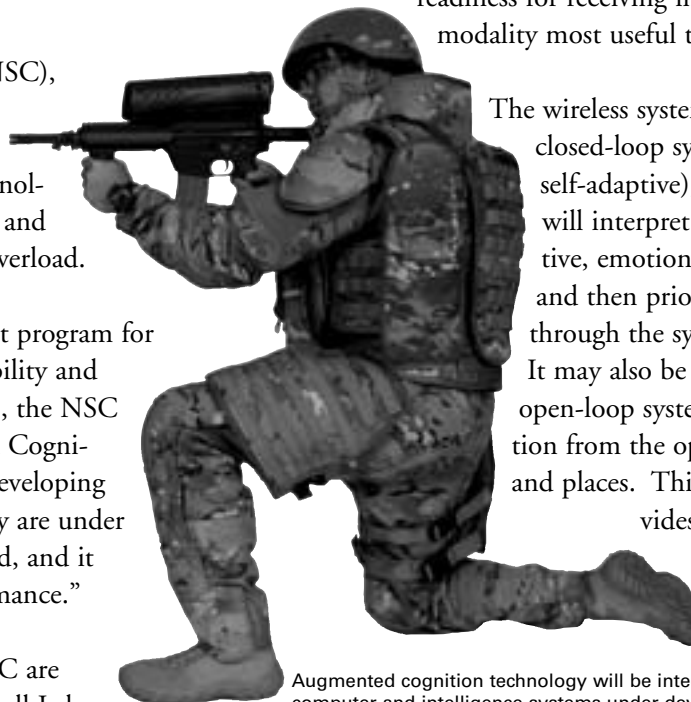
According to Girolamo, DARPA and NSC are managing a research team led by Honeywell Laboratories that foster the development of prototype systems

that can detect and measure a combatant's cognitive state. The technology will assess the warfighter's cognitive state and then influence the way information is sent to the warfighter. This capability will be integrated into communications, computer and intelligence systems currently under development in the U.S. Army's Future Force Warrior (FFW) program and other transformational warfighter systems.

Less Stress for the Warfighter

Augmented cognition systems are expected to reduce warfighter stress by adjusting information management to the combatant based on his cognitive, physical and emotional states as well as environmental conditions. The augmenting system features neurophysiologic sensors that assess the warfighter's focus of attention. The sensors measure and record brain activity as well as physical responses, such as heart rate. This technology will help enhance warfighters' decision-making capabilities by helping them determine which available information is most important, and then to help them decide the best course of action in varying environments. The system will be designed to adapt to each warfighter's preferred learning style, such as whether they respond better to audio, visual or tactile cues and instructions.

Augmented cognition technology may be designed to respond to the context in which the warfighter is operating. For example, if Soldiers are moving in a tactical line formation, the system could use this information, along with brain signals, to better determine the state of attention and readiness for receiving information and in the modality most useful to the Soldiers.



The wireless system will primarily be a closed-loop system (i.e., internally self-adaptive), meaning the system will interpret the warfighter's cognitive, emotional and physical state and then prioritize information through the system for the warfighter. It may also be designed to be an open-loop system, funneling information from the operator to other people and places. This type of system provides decision-making tools to a commander or a medic and assists them in directing or

Augmented cognition technology will be integrated into communications, computer and intelligence systems under development in the Army's FFW program and other transformational warfighter systems. (NSC photo by Jane Benson.)